



Plattsburgh, New York

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"The City of Plattsburgh 2013 Mayor's Budget was one of the most challenging we have faced since being elected in 2007. The uncontrollable costs of retirement, salary, and health care obligations, the Albany legislative 2% Tax Cap, and the unaffordable New York State unfunded mandates continue to adversely affect the City of Plattsburgh and all taxpayers. We have worked very diligently since 2007 in bidding city services, reduce spending, seeking more revenue, and governing conservatively which resulted in a fund balance to address these rising costs and stabilize tax and utility rates. Unfortunately, these cost factors coupled with the lack of meaningful reform change in Albany are now affecting our course of business. The underperforming pension fund which is independently controlled by the New York State Comptroller has also directly affected each and every municipality throughout New York State. In 2000, the city retirement costs were \$17,700 and our 2013 budget retirement obligation is \$3,462,280. These obligations are simply unsustainable and unaffordable and will be the driving force for future tax and utility rate increases."

"The 2013 Mayor's Budget will continue water, sewer, and garbage rates at their present levels. The tax rate will remain at \$10.40 per thousand while the tax levy will increase 1.93%. We adjusted and reduced the 2013 Capital Budget due to long term debt concerns to the taxpayers. There is no question, however, that foreseeable budgets beginning in 2014 will include substantial tax and utility increases due to the rising costs I previously mentioned. To maintain this affordable budget, we utilized a large portion of our fund balance which was created with difficult and conservative decision-making since 2007."

"I appreciate the efforts by Budget Officer Jim Calnon, City Chamberlain Richard Marks and his staff, and the cooperating Department Heads throughout this budget process. We believe this is a sound budget despite the financial challenges we continue to deal with. Future budgets, however, will be the most difficult yet for the City of Plattsburgh and will result in possible reductions in service and personnel."

Mayor Donald M. Kasprzak